(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Bangladesh feels that inter-linking project would deprive them of sufficient water for their needs in the context of rivers of Himalayan Region.

(d) Government of Bangladesh has expressed apprehension at the proposal of linking rivers in bilateral meetings. The issue was discussed in the 35th meeting of the Joint Rivers Commission held in New Delhi in September, 2003. Similarly, the Bangladesh Prime Minister raised this issue during the bilateral meeting with our Prime Minister on the margins of Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand Economic Co-operation (BIMSTEC) summit in May, 2004. It was raised also during the Foreign Office Consultations in June, 2005.

(e) and (f) The Government of India has assured the Bangladesh side that the project was at the conceptual stage. UPA Government gave emphasis in National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) for peninsular component only and therefore apprehension of Bangladesh is not relevant at this stage. The Government of India has also stated that it would not take any unilateral action, which would harm the interest of Bangladesh.

Indus water Treaty, 1960

937. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that talks between India and Pakistan on Tulbul ended recently;

(b) if so, what is the final outcome of the negotiations;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Pakistan is not inclined to adhere to the Indus Water Treaty, 1960; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Secretary Level talks between India and Pakistan on Wullar Barrage/Tulbul Navigation Project were held at New Delhi from 28th to 29th June, 2005 as a part of the Composite Dialogue between the two Countries.

(b) to (d) The views expressed by both Indian and Pakistan sides on the project in terms of the provisions of the Indus Waters Treaty have been recorded. At the end of the meeting, a Joint Press Statement was issued conveying that the two sides agreed to continue the discussion at the next round of the Dialogue Process with a view to resolving the issue in accordance with the provision of the Treaty.

Water crisis

938. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that some States in the country are facing increasing water scarcity year after year;

(b) what long-term plan Government have to assist such States to tide over the water crisis; and

(c) whether Government propose to devise short-term schemes to help the water scarce State for instant relief?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government is aware that owing to growing population, the per capita water availability is reducing year after year.

The Government of India provides assistance to State Governments through various programmes in development of water resources, improving water use efficiency through proper water management, artificial recharge of ground water, restoring the traditional water bodies etc. Depending on emergent situations assistance is also provided through short-term schemes particularly in respect of providing drinking water supply.

Water crisis in Rajasthan

939. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Rajasthan seems to set for a spell of water crisis and consequently the riots; and

(b) the steps Government have taken to address the situation?